

**FDA Issues Final Order - AVA Safe and Effective,  
Protects Individuals at High Risk for Anthrax Disease**

On 15 Dec 05, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a final order reaffirming previous conclusions that the anthrax vaccine prevents anthrax resulting from any route of exposure, including inhalation anthrax.

In light of the Final Order, the Department will review program options. The Military Services will continue anthrax vaccinations as they have since April 2005 on a voluntary basis for eligible servicemembers with the option to refuse.

Scientific experts over the years have consistently found this vaccine to be safe and effective. The FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Academy of Sciences all agree that anthrax vaccine protects against all forms of anthrax and is as safe as other vaccines.

The department's safety record in administering the vaccine has been excellent and open to public scrutiny. Defense experts publish papers in scientific journals and regularly collaborate with the CDC, the FDA and civilian expert groups on vaccine safety projects.

The threat of anthrax as a weapon remains real. It is very important to provide our servicemembers with maximum protection against this threat, particularly when operating in certain areas of the world.

For people at increased risk of exposure, the benefits of the vaccine far outweigh the risks when all factors are considered. Vaccination against anthrax is the best round-the-clock protection available to protect our forces at risk."

*Dr. William Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, on FDA Anthrax Vaccine Ruling*

More information is available at - <http://www.anthrax.mil/fdaorder>

To stay current on information pertaining to the anthrax vaccine and the AVIP, as well as all important information on DOD Vaccine Programs and Vaccination issues, please check out our websites.

Military Vaccine Agency  
<http://www.vaccines.mil>  
<http://www.anthrax.mil>  
<http://www.smallpox.mil>

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